

FORM B - BUILDING

Assessor's number
56/125

USGS Quad
Boston N.

Area(s)

Form Number
1066,1067



Town Lexington

Place (neighborhood or village) Upper Meriam Hill

Address 29 Hayes Avenue

Historic Name Howard & Bertha Nichols House

Uses: Present Residential

Original Residential

Date of Construction 1914

Source Lexington Valuation Lists

Style/Form Craftsman/Colonial Revival

Architect/Builder Willard Brown?

Exterior Material:

Foundation fieldstone

Wall/Trim wide wood clapboard

Roof asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

stone garage (MHC #1067)

Major Alterations (with dates) date? - enclosure of upper porch

Condition good

Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date

Acreage 15,000 SF

Setting mixed 20th century residential area



Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date (month/year) July 2000

BUILDING FORM (29 Hayes Avenue)

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of the building in terms of other buildings within the community.

Constructed in 1914, 29 Hayes Avenue (MHC #1066) is an eclectic two-story residence which displays elements of both the Craftsman and Colonial Revival styles. The house is sheathed in wide wood clapboards with a bold wooden watertable above the fieldstone foundation and another wooden beltcourse wrapping around the building under the second story windows. The building is capped by a hip hipped roof with the overhanging eaves decorated by exposed rafters. Two hipped roof dormers rise from the front roof slope and are also detailed with rafters. The offcenter entrance consists of a six-panel door capped by a semicircular fan and sheltered by an open pediment porch supported by Roman Doric columns which are echoed by pilasters adjacent to the entrance. The section of entablature above the columns as well as the pediment is decorated by dentils. In contrast to the typical Colonial home, the fenestration on the long facade is decidedly asymmetrical and untraditional. Windows include individual 8/1 sash, a tripartite window consisting of a 8/1 window flanked by 4/1 sash and paired 6/1 units. To the left of the entrance there is also a mid level window which breaks through the second story beltcourse.

To the west of the main house block there is a two-story hip-roofed wing which is setback slightly. It would appear that both levels originally consisted of open porches but have been enclosed by 1/1 windows. On the opposite end of the house is another two-story hip-roofed projection, just a single bay deep. This is fronted by a corner entrance porch that is capped by a shed roofed overhang supported by flared brackets with the opening on the east side flanked by low walls.

A paved driveway extends along the east side of the house, terminating at a stone two-car garage (MHC #1067) capped by a hip roof. Tax records indicate that the garage was built at the same time as the house.

The eclectic design of this house suggests it may have been designed by Lexington architect Willard Brown although this has not been verified.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Describe the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

The house at 29 Hayes Avenue was built in 1914 for Howard and Bertha Nichols. Mr. Nichols was assessed in 1914 for just the lot (Lot 71 in the Oakmount Park subdivision), but in 1915 he was also assessed for a house valued at \$12,000 and a \$1,000 garage. The lot next door (31 Hayes Road) was constructed upon the same year by Howard's brother, Ernest Nichols. Howard S.O. Nichols worked as a cotton manufacturer in Boston and later served as assistant treasurer of the Lexington Savings Bank. The property remained in the Nichols family until 1965 when it was sold to John and Ethel Cleary who continued to own it until 1978 when it was purchased by Thomas and Theresa Weschler. The present owner purchased the property in 1991.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Lexington Assessors Records.
Lexington Directories, various dates.
Lexington Valuation Lists, various dates.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attached a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*